

TO: COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND  
ELECTIONS

FROM: ATTORNEY CHERYL A. SHARP--Cromwell

DATE: MARCH 7, 2011

RE: **Senate Bill 1010 AN ACT CONCERNING THE TRANSFER OF  
FUNCTIONS FROM THE DEPARTMENTS OF PUBLIC WORKS,  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, PUBLIC SAFETY AND EDUCATION AND  
THE JUDICAIL SELECTION COMMISSION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF  
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES AND DEPARTMENT OF CONSTRUCTION  
SERVICES**

Good Morning to the Chairs and members of the GAE Committee. I am an attorney and I have been employed with the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) for close to eighteen years. CHRO is the oldest state civil rights agency in the nation and the experts when it comes to civil rights and discrimination law. I respectfully request that the GAE Committee oppose and remove sections 20-23 of Senate Bill 1010.

The CHRO is charged with eliminating discrimination in employment, housing, credit and places of public accommodation through enforcement, education and advocacy. One of the ways in which the CHRO achieves its mission is by ensuring that state agencies are in compliance with the equal opportunity requirements as set out by law. The CHRO is the watchdog that ensures that state agencies comply with their statutory obligation to employ, contract for services, issue licenses, administer programs, etc. in a fair, non-discriminatory manner. Having broad based authority and oversight allows the CHRO to be effective in its role of eliminating discrimination throughout the state. Connecticut General Statutes Section 46a-68 authorizes the CHRO to monitor affirmative action plans developed by state agencies. Thus, the role of CHRO is one of oversight. DAS prepares affirmative action plans, creates job specifications, administers exams and should not then oversee their own performance. DAS is not an expert in discrimination law, nor should that be the expectation for DAS. The CHRO has almost sixty years of experience educating, advocating or enforcing civil rights laws. DAS does not have this history or the expertise. Thus, to transfer oversight authority to DAS would create a conflict of interest and will dilute affirmative action in our state or potentially obliterate the program.

Thank you for your time and attention.